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UNIVERSITY INTERESTS

IN

CINCINNATI.

BY

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*An Address delivered before the Board of Trustees of the University of Cincinnati,
February 4th, 1889.*



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Dr J. C. CULBERTSON.

I desire to thank the Board of Trustees, and especially their President, for the opportunity and privilege of addressing you at this time on so important a topic as the one we are to discuss on this occasion.

In contemplating the educational interests of the city, we are very naturally led to inquire somewhat into the affairs of the University, and investigate its apparent dormant condition, the causes pertaining thereto, and the possibility of changes that would inure to its prosperity and development. These inquiries have led me to believe that we have here one of the grandest opportunities ever presented to men for the creation of a colossal institution of learning.

First, as to the sinews of war: Its revenues at this time are mainly derived from the estate of the late Charles McMicken, of grateful memory, who died in March, 1858, and whose will was probated the succeeding month, in which he devised the major portion of his large estate to the city of Cincinnati for the creation of a University for the free education of the boys and girls of this—the city of his adoption.

One of the provisions of the will, as found in Section XXXII, is the direction that the college buildings should be erected on the lot on which he then resided, and which at that time was no doubt admirably adapted for the purpose he there and then designated, but which, after the lapse of more than thirty years, is found to be so unsuitable, by reason of the changed physical conditions of the great and growing city, that in the month of November last a previously appointed committee of the Board of Trustees brought

in a report on this very subject, that had been referred to them at a previous meeting for investigation. This report states :

"Your committee have again considered the subject, and have only been confirmed in the conclusion reached on the former occasion—namely, that without a release from the heirs of Charles McMicken, or else without the decree of a proper court so authorizing, it would be extremely unwise for this Board to undertake to locate any part of the University, maintained in whole or in part by the funds derived from the McMicken bequest, upon any other property than that named in the McMicken will.

"The reasons which lead us to this conclusion also require us to state that without similar authority it would be equally unwise to devote any part of that property on which McMicken resided at the time of his death, viz., the lot on which the University building now stands, to any purposes except buildings for the University strictly—that is, for recitation-rooms and dormitories or college boarding-houses."

The committee points out and directs the course to be pursued in order to the removal of the University buildings, or rather the erection of new buildings, in a more desirable location, viz., *by obtaining a decree from a proper court.*

First, Is such a change of location desirable? Any judge, jury or other body of men who would give the case any thought and investigation could not but at once bring in a verdict that the change of location is not only desirable, but is absolutely necessary to the growth and prosperity of the University. So apparent is this that we are unable to see how it would be possible, on a fair presentation and statement of all the existing conditions, for a judge of the court to refuse to grant such a decree, if requested so to do by a board of trustees composed of such men as constitute this Board. Yet, further, there is ample evidence to show that Mr. McMicken was not wedded to this special locality as a building site, but that he was wedded, body and soul, to the idea of giving the main portion of his estate to the city of Cincinnati for the founding of a University for the free education of the boys and girls of this city. That was the uppermost and controlling thought of his mind; that was the spirit that actuated this great and good man in the bestowal of his munificent gift. This action on his part can never be interpreted to mean anything else, nor will any appellate court decide otherwise.

However, we will suppose that from some unforeseen cause, as neglect of cognizance, an upper court should reverse a righteous decision of this character; or, from a misunderstanding of the

situation, the supreme court of our Nation should by any possibility issue a decree adverse to that of the lower courts. The only possible result would be an order to resume exercises on the lot designated by Mr. McMicken. The property of the McMicken estate could not be diverted to any other channel than the one indicated by him, because the trustees would all the time be acting under an order or decree of court, that would assuredly protect the property in the interests of the intent of the devisee.

This supposition of a contest is entirely imaginary.

We will now suppose the Trustees are in possession of a proper decree from a proper court, duly authorizing the occupancy of other grounds owned by the municipality for University and educational purposes. What then? Then it would necessitate the selection of a new and desirable location.

Very fortunately, we find, immediately north of the University, a beautiful park that is most admirably adapted for this very purpose, and which the city Board of Public Affairs have, in a most commendable spirit, placed at your disposal for the purposes of the University. Not only have they done this, but, realizing and appreciating the grand scheme that may be wrought out in this connection for the common good and welfare of our city, have generously and with commendable enthusiasm said they would aid the enterprise in every way that was in their power.

This accomplished, you are ready to say there are no funds with which to erect buildings. And, your President said to me, the next step would be an issuance of bonds for this purpose. That would be a fatal mistake. The name of the University should never appear on the tax duplicate, as no man should by law be required to in any form pay a tax to give a classical, professional or ornamental education to his neighbor's children.

How then? Then would be the time, occasion and opportunity to do some effectual preaching to some of our very best people. That preaching must become a protracted service, and our people should be told that the Board of University Trustees are wide awake, and are determined to push the University project with all the energy and wisdom they are known to possess.

The recent resignation of the President of the University Faculty makes a vacancy that must be filled at an early date, and the man selected for the place must not only possess the necessary educational qualifications, but must be a man who will enter on his work with a great heart full of enthusiasm, and a faith that will

never falter before any possible obstacles. The duties of the President are multifarious, and will demand all of his days and many of his nights. He must be a skilled and expert practitioner of the art of Gumption. He must, in conjunction with the Board of Trustees—every member of it—and also the Faculty, tell the story of the University to our patriotic and doubly-blessed citizens: How the main buildings of a grand institution of learning are to be erected in Burnet Woods Park; how the entire south end of the park is to be devoted to the uses of a magnificent botanic garden,—for which it is most admirably adapted,—where it will be necessary to have many conservatories built for the growing of tropic plants, shrubs, flowers and fruits; how the Natural History Society, of which the city has good reason to be very proud, will be invited to erect their own buildings in the park, and adjacent to those of the University, for the reception of their magnificent and rapidly-growing museum. This is practicable and possible of accomplishment, and will provide such opportunities, in connection with the adjacent—almost adjoining—Zoölogical Garden, for the study of natural history as may not be found elsewhere on this continent.

The Technological School, which has recently been organized and put in operation under such encouraging auspices, should become an endowed department of the University. And, so soon as the arrangement could be made, that school should be placed in the present University buildings; they would answer for shop purposes.

Yet further: In reading the will of Mr. McMicken it is plainly evident that, so far as possible, he desired that the education given should be of a practical character, and of just exactly the nature of that given in a technological school. So that the using of the present University building in this way would be entirely in consonance with his wishes.

Mr. McMicken never dreamed of professorships of the Arabic, Sanskrit, Zend, or modern Greek languages. His educational ideas were of a practical and moral character, and such that would make of boys and girls good and intelligent citizens of our republic, and who, if called upon, would be qualified by education to adorn the most honorable places within the gift of their fellowmen.

The practical departments are always the ones that are filled with students, and for this reason the university in its formative stage should first most thoroughly cultivate the schools that will at once attract students. It is far from desirable to fill professorial

chairs for the immediate purpose of teaching one, two, or three pupils any one study or branch. Such things sound very loud and broaden a catalogue, but it comes very high and is not the thing most desired yet awhile. In the sweet by and by these chairs and studies may be dovetailed in with the more useful, but at present the brass ornaments may be dispensed with, and with advantage to the University.

There should be a Law School in connection with the University; and as the manager of the Cincinnati Law School has declined to have that institution affiliated with the University, it becomes necessary to organize this as a new department. This would at once be largely patronized.

The Dental and two of the leading medical schools are already affiliated with the University, but a splendid opportunity exists for extending the usefulness of and aiding these and all the other medical schools in the city. The Cincinnati Hospital Trustees have recently provided that institution with a Bacteriological Laboratory—one that is complete in all its appointments and adapted for microscopical, pathological, and histological research. I would have the Trustees of the Hospital in conjunction with the Trustees of the University go further: I would have them provide a suitable building two or three stories high, one floor of which should be provided with all the most modern and approved arrangements for the practical study of anatomy; if necessary with fifty to one hundred tables for dissecting purposes. To this building should be taken all the dead who die in Hamilton County charitable or eleemosynary institutions, or in the jail or workhouse, or whose bodies find their way to the morgue and are unclaimed by their friends after the time specified by law. Such bodies as are unclaimed should then be used for the practical study of anatomy, surgery, and obstetrics.

The other stories of this building should be used for pathological demonstrations and teaching in connection with histology and microscopy. These departments in medicine are of necessity the same in all medical schools, and all students, whether in regular, eclectic, or homœopathic schools, could come to this school and there receive a superior education in the subjects taught. The entire fee for instruction and all necessary material, including its preparation, should not exceed \$10.00 for the entire course.

There would be required two or more teachers, with an assistant for each, in order to properly carry on this school. These

teachers should be nominated by the conjoined faculties of the medical schools that are now in affiliation with the University, and such nominations confirmed by the Trustees of the University; who should also in turn pay them a reasonable salary. The students fees to be used exclusively in the payment of the necessary expense account of the school and kept in a separate fund in the University accounts.

In like manner and for like reasons the conjoined faculties of the affiliated medical colleges should nominate, and the University Trustees confirm and pay, a professor of physiology and his assistants.

The Chair of Chemistry in the University is now ably filled, and should be the actual chair of chemistry for the Dental and all the Medical colleges. This would necessitate the appointment of adjunct professors, which should be done in the same manner as the foregoing.

I am impelled to make these suggestions because of the continued remarkable unity, harmony, and good will that has for some years prevailed within the ranks of the medical profession of this city. So characteristic has this been, and the rivalry of the various colleges of so generous a nature, as to make this seem to be a most auspicious time to promulgate a scheme of this nature. United in this work for a long pull and a strong pull and a pull altogether, anything that is possible in medical teaching in any place is practicable and possible in this our own Queen City.

This school would not in any sense be a competitor with the existing colleges, granting no degrees, but would be an invaluable adjunct to their curriculum. It would relieve them of the necessity of maintaining separate dissecting and pathological rooms—rooms that are always a prolific source of trouble, expense and vexation, and without corresponding profit to the professors. This nominally and practically free school would be a valuable attraction to students in all the Central, Southern, and Western States, and add immensely to the numbers who annually come here for instruction.

Of what particular advantage would this be to Cincinnati? Why, sirs! If five hundred additional students can be brought to this city they will expend while here, for various purposes, more than \$200,000; and I believe it within the possibilities to bring not only five hundred, but two, three, and even five times that number, in addition to the number that now find their way here.

I have faith to believe that this is practicable and may be rendered possible. Not only so, but steps of this nature are absolutely necessary in order that this city may retain its prestige as an educational center for the medical profession. The great Eastern cities have been compelled to take just such steps as these, not only to keep abreast with the studies of the scientific world, but to retain our own students in our own land; and as they have erected scientific barricades to migration on the seaboard, let our men and women of means, coöperating with our constituted authorities, in like manner build here a wall that shall be of colossal proportions and embrace a magnet that will attract multitudes of students from all over this blessed land.

In a recent conversation with one of the professors at Ann Arbor, Michigan, he informed me that there are in attendance at the University of Michigan eighteen hundred and fifty-six pupils, and that the average student expends while there during the annual course more than five hundred dollars, or the whole number expends in the year more than \$928,000; and that very many of these students are from Ohio and Indiana, but attracted to Ann Arbor by the facilities afforded and the low tuition fees.

The Law School already referred to as a department of the University should be made almost absolutely free to students, only a matriculation fee being required, while the course of lectures and recitations should be the equal or possible superior of those in any similar school in this country.

The Normal School conducted under the auspices of the School Board is not a part of the common school system, and should be made a department of the University, and should if possible, and I believe it is possible, be so conducted as to attract young men and women from every quarter who have a desire to become teachers. The attraction should be offered in the shape of superior facilities, superior teaching, and with only a reasonable matriculation fee for the advantages offered.

The academic course I approach with some trepidation, as it has been moulded by able and skillful hands; but inasmuch as the past history of the University is not stamped with the seal of great success, I am impelled to say that a reorganization of the course might be considered with a reasonable degree of hope for increased usefulness. Past failures and mistakes should serve as object lessons in the construction of a reorganization scheme.

Of one thing I am convinced—the University Trustees made a

very grave mistake in going away from home to obtain professors for the different chairs they proposed to fill. "The hills are green far away" is an old and homely adage, but one that seems to have been written in great capital letters on the University professorial guideboard. Even at their meeting in last December the professor of natural history was given an indefinite leave of absence. And forthwith, by some occult means, a man from a distant college was proposed for the vacant chair, no one in our own city, apparently, being aware that there would be such a vacancy. While I am far from offering the slightest disparagement to the gentleman selected for the place, I am free to say his equal and perhaps superior could have been obtained right here in our own city. Could our great Natural History Society have attained its present condition and proportions if we had no naturalists in our midst? Or where in the West or any place else is there a peer to our Cuvier Club in practical interest in such matters? Could it have been born and brought up to such magnificent proportions unless it were nurtured and fondled by naturalists? And yet, forsooth, our Board must go away off to the green hills to find a man to teach natural history in the Cincinnati University.

How is it that when an occasion like this arises, where there is a teaching faculty of thirteen and only one hundred and sixteen pupils, that one of the remaining twelve or thirteen is not able to fill the vacant chair for a few months? Certainly a course like this would be wise under existing conditions.

My attention has been drawn to a most novel proposition on the part of the late President of the Faculty. (See his special report to the Trustees, December 17, 1888, p. 11.) It is nothing more nor less than the organization of the conjoined members of the Faculty into a President. We can understand how one man and one woman, united by the ties of marriage may be regarded as one being; their entire life interests have become identical, and in the ideal state are one and inseparable. This is all right, and we can fairly understand the relation, and that if one says black is some other color the other will affirm the assertion. The courts recognize this in not accepting the testimony of a man and wife against each other. But when we are told that thirteen or fourteen professors—all men—each in his own mind a master, an expert, can mould themselves into one, and to act of their own accord as one, and can be held to a responsibility as one, our credulity is assailed. The millennium is coming, but it is not that near.

Have you never watched a crew in a row boat ? if the water is smooth the man at the helm or tiller seems to be of very little service in propelling the boat, but let the winds blow and the waves become capped with white crests, then the man holding the tiller ropes is necessary in order to guide the craft to a harbor of safety. Arrived in the harbor the landing can only be safely made under his guidance. What is the condition of a vessel at sea without a helm and intelligent brains to guide it ? Did you ever hear of the conjoined Colonels of an army formulating a plan of campaign, or fighting a battle ? And yet in either case a commander is not more necessary than in the case of a University faculty. The late President advises the Board of Trustees to adopt a rule to refer all questions affecting the college work proper to the faculty and ask their report and recommendation as a unit. I do not believe there is a man present who believes that any thirteen or fourteen professorial minds were ever created or built on a plan for that purpose.

A president is necessary. It is his prerogative to hear all questions pertaining to, and affecting the college work proper, and if at any time he desires to call a faculty meeting for consultation, he should present the subject for consideration, hear the views of members present, and then act in accordance with his own judgment, assuming and being held to account for the responsibility that belongs to his position.

The McMicken Review should be the organ, and so far as possible the mouth-piece of the University. Every issue should have in it one or more contributions from the members of the faculty, and it should go to every public and private school in the Ohio Valley.

In this connection your attention is directed to the *Commercial Gazette* of January 28, in which there is more than a column of "College News," telling the readers of that widely circulated paper of what is going on in a goodly number of the Universities and Colleges, and in many places of the special and extra professorial work being done by the Presidents and Professors in the cause of higher education, aptly illustrating the various means that are being used for the purpose of exciting and keeping up an interest among the people in the different institutions of learning. But from end to end there is never mentioned the name of the Cincinnati University or of any one connected with it.

Could such a column be published in a Boston paper without a

reference to Harvard; in a New York paper without a reference to Columbia, Yale, Cornell and Princeton, or in a Baltimore paper, and not refer to Johns Hopkins, or in a Detroit paper and not speak of the University of Michigan?

The value in a purely monetary sense of our educational institutions to this city is scarcely comprehended or realized by our citizens. It is easily susceptible of demonstration, that non resident pupils and students bring to and expend for their necessities while here, annually a sum much exceeding a million of dollars.

There has been very justly a large amount of glorification and congratulation over the building of the Southern Rail Road, and recently over the entrance of another great trunk line, with the construction of a grand bridge over our beautiful river; but neither of these roads will of themselves expend in this city anything like the sum received from students.

A cardinal feature in the employment of any teacher or professor, that should be insisted upon under pain of dismissal if wilfully disregarded, should be loyalty and an enthusiastic whole-hearted service. This should mean not merely an attendance upon the necessary recitations, but they should attend, and be active members of all the teachers' institutes of the Ohio Valley. They should make frequent visitations to all public and private schools that are in any way tributary to the University. For intellectual training all roads should lead to the Queen City. To prospect, lay out, and build these roads, and turn the avenues of travel, with the hosts to pass over them in this direction means work; intelligent, persistent hard work is a necessity to success, and without it failure in big black letters will be written on all the University door-posts.

The University cannot afford any dilletante, or sinecure professorships.

Principals of local private schools should be encouraged to prepare their pupils especially for the courses given in the Cincinnati University, and they should be induced to cease their laudations of other Colleges and Universities at the expense of our own. The public schools are all of them the natural preparatory schools for the University.

The people of Cincinnati should on all possible occasions have their pride cultivated and gratified by being shown the results of educational work in their own city. In fact the vision of the University as the benefactor and educator of the boys

and girls, young men and maidens of Cincinnati, and of all the country tributary should be ever present in the minds of the people. And those men, and women too, who have been doubly blessed by the possession of large means should not be allowed to die happily in this city until they had erected for themselves memorial stones in the University Campus. Such men and women should be told over and over again the story of 'Abou Ben Adhem,' and that only to such as he would the pearly gates swing wide on their hinges.

In conclusion, let me call your attention to one cause, in my opinion a fundamental cause of the small success of the Cincinnati University. By reference to the will of Mr. McMicken you cannot but be impressed with the belief that he was a devout Christian man.

In the preamble of Section XXXI, he acknowledges his Creator in two different places, in the last of which he refers to his own gratitude to God for His kind Providence.

In Section XXXIV, he further emphasizes his thoughts in this connection, by saying: "The Holy Bible of the Protestant version as contained in the Old and New Testaments shall be used as a book of instruction in the said Colleges."

Here is something specific and entirely in consonance with the spirit and desire of the late Charles McMicken.

Had the Board of Trustees of the University been as great sticklers for the carrying out of this section, as of the one pertaining to the location, there might possibly be found a different degree of prosperity from that which now exists.

In fact to a looker on these many years, there has seemed to be a studied determination on the part of the Board of Trustees and Faculty to practically evade and ignore this part of Mr. Charles McMicken's will, and this grievous mistake will continue until there is a daily reading in the University Hall of a portion of the Holy Bible of the Protestant version, as contained in the Old and New Testaments; and it behooves the President or his representative to do this cheerfully, heartily and with alacrity, at the same time exacting the attendance upon such exercises of every member of the Faculty, and of every pupil that goes to the University for instruction and to receive its benefits. The professor, teacher or pupil that does not wish to comply with this reasonable wish of Mr. McMicken should not desire to partake of the benefits of his munificent legacy.

Let me tell you something more—mainly the men and women who hold the pursestrings of large wealth in this city, are God fearing, God loving and Bible respecting men and women, who have decided opinions, and were cast in the same mould of thought with the late Charles McMicken, and you cannot by any plausible showing that may be made, induce them to give of their abundance to endow any chair or fellowship, or erect a memorial stone of any size, shape or character in what they regard as a Godless institution, or in which its managers are kept on a perpetual strain in their efforts to keep it in that category. They have no confidence in that kind of an education for boys and girls, young men and maidens.

The President of the Board of Trustees, and the President of the Faculty should—aye must, as their bounden duty, in tones that are earnest, and without a falter tell the students of the University of the valuable moral instruction there is found in the Holy Bible of the Protestant version. There is neither whimper nor cant manifested or displayed in the will of Mr. McMicken. He justly recognized the great moral value to the people of a religious education that was devoid of sectarianism. The trustees of the University should declare it as their fixed and unalterable policy; a determination to carry out the wise injunctions of Mr. McMicken. It is only by this course that the confidence and sustaining good will of the people can be obtained. It is only through this channel that access may be had to the listening ears of those who have the ability to add to the endowment funds of the University.

In this connection hear me a moment longer. The endowment funds of the University are not one-half, or one-quarter of the amount necessary to make the Cincinnati University rank with the foremost institutions of learning in this land.

As a financial investment, our largest property owners cannot do better than to place a goodly portion of their means to the credit of the endowment funds of the University.

Every school and department of the University must be made absolutely free of tuition to students who come and pay a small but fair matriculation fee. Every department of instruction must be fully equipped, and made as efficient as it is within the power of men to accomplish.

When this is done, and the boys and girls, young men and maidens, and professional teachers of the Ohio Valley are made

cognizant of these facts, you may expect, and have your most ardent expectations realized, to see a great army of boys and girls, youths and maidens thronging the streets of the Queen City as they wend their way to the various halls and recitation-rooms of the Cincinnati University.

The scheme designated in this paper is only one to be regarded as an indication of what may be put in motion and accomplished in the immediate future.

Those who hold the reins of administration of this great trust must have conceptions broad enough, and fix their goal high enough, to eventually make of this city the veritable Athens of America. To no other men is given a grander opportunity to establish a colossal institution of learning than to the Trustees of the Cincinnati University.

This Queen City of the West, on the banks of the beautiful river, has very many very precious jewels in her crown, that sparkle and scintillate with exceeding brightness; but there is left a place in the very front center of this beautiful crown for the setting of one other jewel—one other stone, that must be a gem of the first magnitude, that will surpass all others in the glory and effulgence of its rays; that will make this as a city on a hill enlightening the whole world. Who will not join me in saying that gem—that jewel—must and can be none other than THE CINCINNATI UNIVERSITY.

